

REMARKS

A. Objection to Drawings

In the Quayle Action mailed on October 1, 2003, the drawings were objected to in that FIGS. 1 and 3 were allegedly inconsistent with FIG. 4a. In particular, it was asserted that FIGS. 1 and 3 fail to illustrate a service element “laterally bordered by a lateral edge” as recited in claims 1, 23 and 25. Applicants traverse this objection. Claims 1, 23 and 25 recite that “a surface of said base body . . . is laterally bordered by a lateral edge” (emphasis added). As shown in the embodiment of FIG. 4a, the base body 30 defines a surface 35a having a lateral outer edge 35b. (See page 14, lines 17-20 of Applicants’ Specification). Since there is support for the language of claims 1, 23 and 25 in the embodiment shown in FIG. 4a, the objection is improper and should be withdrawn.

The drawings were objected to in that the drawings did not show certain features recited in claims 11, 15, 16 and 17. Regarding the objection related to claim 11, FIG. 4b and the Specification have been amended so as to show and describe a tool 100 to interact with cross slit 33a. Regarding the objections related to claims 15-17, the claims have been canceled rendering the objections moot. Accordingly, the objections have been overcome and should be withdrawn.

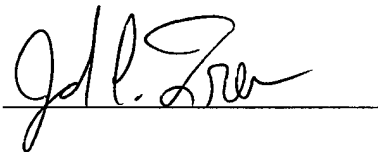
B. Reasons for Allowance

Applicants note that an Examiner’s statement of reasons for the allowance of claims 1, 23 and 25 have been given in the Office Action. Applicants traverse the statement to the extent that there are broader and other reasons that the claims are allowable over the prior art.

CONCLUSION

In view of the arguments above, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims 1-14 and 18-25 are in condition for allowance and seek an early allowance thereof. If for any reason, the Examiner is unable to allow the application in the next Office Action and believes that an interview would be helpful to resolve any remaining issues, he is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorneys at (312) 321-4200.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John C. Freeman", is written over a horizontal line.

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